

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 L-01 PRS-01 SY-02 AF-04 EUR-08 INR-05 SSO-00

INRE-00 SP-02 NEAE-00 /052 W
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O P 201010Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1895

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN JORDAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT LEBANON PRIORITY

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AMCONSUL KARACHI PAKISTAN PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 MANAMA 00217

LIMDIS

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD; LONDON FOR LAMBRAKIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PORS, PINS, MASS, UK, JO, SA

SUBJECT : ADVISORY ROLES OF THE UK AND CERTAIN OTHER
COUNTRIES IN THE PERSIAN GULF STATES

REFERENCE : STATE 29563; STATE A-74

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1. SUMMARY: KEY EXPATRIATE ELEMENT IN BAHRAIN SECURITY

APPARATUS IS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE HANDFUL OF BRITISHERS IN POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. THEIR STATUS APPEARS REASONABLY SECURE FOR NEAR FUTURE. JORDANIAN ROLE IN BOTH POLICE AND BAHRAIN DEFENSE FORCE IS MODEST AND HELPFUL. GOB IS ANGLING FOR SAUDI HELP IN FINANCING BDF EQUIPMENT AND UTILIZES SOME SAUDI TRAINING FACILITIES. THE UK, JORDANIAN AND SAUDI ROLES ARE NOT IN CONFLICT. ALL SERVE US POLICY INTERESTS. GOB HAS NOT SOUGHT US ADVICE OR SUPPORT IN ENCOURAGING GREATER BRITISH, JORDANIAN, SAUDI PARTICIPATION. INEVITABLE GOB EFFORT TO ACQUIRE US TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT SHOULD PRESENT NO MAJOR POLICY PROBLEM BUT IN OUR RESPONSE WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO WEAKEN EXPATRIATE ROLES WHICH SERVE OUR NEEDS.

2. REGRET LAST MINUTE RESPONSE REFTEL WHICH, BECAUSE OF TRANSMISSION DELAYS, I FIRST SAW UPON RETURN FROM RECENT RIYADH CONFERENCE.

3. AT OUTSET MUST POINT OUT USG INFORMATION ON NUMBER OF UK ADVISORS IS MISLEADING. WE WERE ALL VICTIMS MICHAEL WIER'S MUMBLING IN MAY WASHINGTON TALKS. THERE ARE NOT SOME 90 BRITISH OFFICERS AND TECHNICIANS IN BAHRAIN DEFENSE FORCE; THERE ARE NONE. ACCORDING UK AMBASSADOR, THERE HAVE NEVER BEEN ANY EXCEPT FOR CROWN PRINCE'S PERSONAL AIDE. AT PRESENT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 60 UK GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED TECHNICIANS AND ADVISORS IN VARIOUS CIVILIAN MINISTRIES, LARGELY SCHOOL TEACHERS. FIGURE OF FIFTEEN BRITISH OFFICERS IN POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICE IS APPROXIMATELY ACCURATE. FIGURES ON JORDANIAN OFFICERS IN POLICE AND BDF (REFERENCE AIRGRAM AND AMMAN 1060) APPEAR APPROXIMATELY CORRECT.

4. UK ROLE:

A. POLICE: PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE AND SINCE THERE HAVE BEEN SURPRISINGLY FEW SECONDED BRITISH OFFICERS SERVING IN BAHRAIN. THIS IS PROBABLY BECAUSE THE MAJOR BRITISH COMBAT FORCE PROTECTING THE GULF WAS STATIONED HERE AND HENCE WAS IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE TO PLAY AN INTERNAL SECURITY ROLE PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE IF NEEDED. UK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SECONDING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF BRITISH OFFICERS

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TO BDF AT THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE WERE ULTIMATELY REJECTED BY THE GOB. THUS, WITH THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL IN 1971, THERE WAS A DRAMATIC DROP IN THE OVERALL BRITISH SECURITY PRESENCE. SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO CHANGE IN THE NUMBER, EFFECTIVENESS OR ACCEPTABILITY OF THE HANDFUL OF BRITISHERS IN THE POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS. THE BRITISH POLICE COMMANDANT, MAJOR GENERAL BELL, IS THE SENIOR OF THE DIRECT HIRE UK NATIONALS,

INCLUDING THE RIOT SQUAD COMMANDER, A POLICE HELICOPTER
UNIT OFFICER AND A COAST GUARD OFFICER.
THE BRITISH TOTAL ABOUT FIVE, BUT NONE
IS A SECONDED OFFICER. ACCORDING TO UK AMBASSADOR, BELL
AND HIS COLLEAGUES INCREASINGLY ARE MOVING TOWARD ADVISORY
RATHER THAN COMMAND ROLES, BUT OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THEY
STILL RETAIN IMPORTANT LINE FUNCTION. THE POLICE ARE
UNDER THE CLOSE CONTROL OF THE PRIME MINISTER (AMIR'S
BROTHER) THROUGH THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR (AMIR'S COUSIN)
WHO IS SANDHURST TRAINED. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SOME
RUMORS OF FRICTION BETWEEN THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND
THE SENIOR BRITISH OFFICERS WHEN THE MINISTER ASSUMED HIS
PORTFOLIO SLIGHTLY OVER A YEAR AGO, THIS INEVITABLE
SETTLING-IN TENSION APPEARS TO HAVE RELAXED. THE MIN-
ISTER SEEMS TO HAVE FIRM CONTROL AND TO RELY COMFORTABLY
ON THE ADVICE OF THE BRITISH. POLICE OFFICERS INCLUDE A

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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SY-02 SP-02 NEAE-00 /052 W

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O P 201010Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1896

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN JORDAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT LEBANON PRIORITY

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 MANAMA 00217

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TAGS : PORS, PINS, MASS, UK, JO, SA

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SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF RULING AL KHALIFA FAMILY MEMBERS.
THE RANK AND FILE OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY ELEMENTS OF THE
POLICE, NOTABLY THE 150-MAN RIOT SQUAD, ARE NON-BAHRAINI,
LARGELY OMANIS AND BALUCHIS WHO HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN
RELATIVELY IMMUNE FROM NATIONALIST OR SUBVERSIVE INFLUENCE.

B. INTELLIGENCE SERVICE: THE KEY SECURITY FIGURE
IN BAHRAIN IS SPECIAL BRANCH CHIEF IAN HENDERSON. HE
AND SEVEN BRITISH COLLEAGUES OPERATE A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
AND FEARED INTELLIGENCE NETWORK WHICH REPORTS TO THE PRIME
MINISTER AND AMIR. THE AMIR HAS PERSONALLY EXPRESSED TO
ME HIS TOTAL CONFIDENCE IN HENDERSON. THROUGHOUT HIS LONG
TENURE IN BAHRAIN, THERE HAVE BEEN PERIODIC REPORTS THAT
HENDERSON WAS ON THE VERGE OF LEAVING. HE IS STILL HERE.
WE SEE NO EVIDENCE OF GOB DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PER-
FORMANCE AND PRESENCE OF THE BRITISH POLICE AND INTELLI-
GENCE OFFICERS.

C. BDF: THE BAHRAINI DEFENSE FORCE, LARGELY OF
BAHRAINI COMPOSITION AND HEADED BY CROWN PRINCE DEFENSE
MINISTER SHEIKH MOHAMMED, STILL APPEARS TO BE SEARCHING
FOR A ROLE IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY EVIDENCE OF PLAUSIBLE
EXTERNAL THREAT TO BAHRAIN. DESPITE THE NUMBER OF AL
KHALIFA FAMILY OFFICERS IN THE BDF, SINCE ITS ESTABLISH-
MENT IT HAS SUFFERED FROM RULING FAMILY CONCERN ABOUT THE
POLITICAL RELIABILITY OF SOME OF THE RANK AND FILE.
PERHAPS LARGELY FOR THIS REASON THE GOB HAS, SINCE
INDEPENDENCE, DISPLAYED SOME TENDENCY TO BEEF UP THE
POLICE MORE THAN THE BDF. THE BRITISH, PRIOR TO BAHRAIN'S
INDEPENDENCE, SEEM TO HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE ABOUT THE ESTAB-
LISHMENT OF THE BDF, AND ACCORDING TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR,
BRITISH OFFICERS HAVE NEVER SERVED IN IT.

5. JORDANIAN ROLE: RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AL-KHALIFA AND

THE HASHEMITES ARE NOTABLY FRIENDLY. FOR SOME TIME THERE HAVE BEEN JORDANIAN OFFICERS SERVING IN SENIOR LINE POSITIONS IN THE POLICE AND "ADVISORY" ROLES IN THE BDF. JORDANIAN OFFICERS IN BAHRAIN SEEM WELCOME AND WELL LIKED AND APPEAR TO BE REASONABLY COMPETENT. GOB TRUSTS THEM AND RESPECTS THEIR RELATIVE COMPETENCE BY ARAB STANDARDS AND BAHRAIN UTILIZES JORDANIAN TRAINING FACILITIES FOR BOTH POLICE AND BDF OFFICERS. AS POLICY MATTER, GOB WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ADVERSE TO RECEIVING BY
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TRANSFER THROUGH JORDAN MODEST AMOUNT OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT, WITH JORDANIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL PROVIDING THE RELATED TRAINING. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PERCEIVE AN INTERNAL SECURITY DISTURBANCE HERE IN WHICH THE INTERVENTION OF JORDANIAN SPECIAL FORCES BRIGADE WOULD BE REQUIRED OR POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE.

6. SAUDI ARABIAN ROLE: GOB DEFENSE MINISTER SPENDS GOOD DEAL OF TIME IN SAUDI ARABIA AND IS IMPRESSED BY THE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY OF THE SAUDI FORCES. GOB CONTINUES TO UTILIZE ON A SMALL SCALE SAUDI MILITARY TRAINING FACILITIES. RECENTLY A SAUDI MILITARY MISSION VISITED HERE TO EVALUATE BAHRAIN'S MILITARY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS. GOB WOULD PROBABLY WELCOME SAUDI FUNDING FOR CERTAIN OF ITS FUTURE MILITARY ACQUISITIONS. CONCEIVABLY AT SOME POINT SAUDI ARABIA AND GOB MIGHT AGREE TO STATIONING BATTERY OF SAUDI ARABIAN HAWK ANTI-AIRCRAFT NETWORK IN BAHRAIN AT SAUDI EXPENSE. THERE APPEARS LITTLE POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN JORDANIAN AND SAUDI ROLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BDF SINCE SAUDI AND JORDANIAN CAPABILITIES ARE SO DIFFERENT, WITH THE JORDANIANS ABLE TO PROVIDE HUMAN RESOURCES WHILE THE SAUDIS ARE CAPABLE OF SUPPLYING FINANCIAL HELP.

7. ROLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES: SINCE THE BAHRAINI POLICE FORCE HISTORICALLY UTILIZED A NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND

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ACTION NEA-06

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PM-03 L-01 PRS-01 AF-04 EUR-08 INR-05 SY-02 SP-02

SSO-00 INRE-00 NEAE-00 /052 W

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O P 201010Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1901

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE PRIORITY

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NCO'S FROM BRITISH INDIA, THERE IS A RESIDUE OF PAKISTANI
NATIONALS IN THE POLICE, PARTICULARLY IN THE NCO RANKS.
THIS IS THE RESULT OF HISTORY, NOT PRESENT POLICY. WHILE
THE PRIME MINISTER HAS MENTIONED TO ME THAT IRAN HAS
OFFERED TO HELP BAHRAIN'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS MILITARY
CAPABILITIES, IT IS NOT YET CLEAR THAT ANY CONCRETE ACTIVITY
WILL RESULT. WITH IRAN'S LONG CLAIM TO BAHRAIN BUT RECENTLY

RELINQUISHED, PRESENCE OF IRANIAN MILITARY OR POLICE ADVISORS
HERE WOULD APPEAR IMPOLITIC AND UNLIKELY IN THE FORESEEABLE
FUTURE.

8. U.S. ROLE: GOB HAS SO FAR NOT EVIDENCED INTEREST IN
RESIDENT AMERICAN ADVISORS. IT FEELS FREE TO CALL INFORMALLY
ON THE PROFESSIONAL ADVICE OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE OFFICERS
STATIONED HERE AND ON THE HELP OF USMTM, SAUDI ARABIA.
THE DEFENSE MINISTER ATTENDED LEAVENWORTH STAFF COLLEGE AND
RETURNED NOTABLY IMPRESSED WITH US EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.
AS A RESULT, FOUR BAHRAINI OFFICERS ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING
IN US FOR RANGER TRAINING. IN 1972 USG PROVIDED A SURVEY
FOR THE BAHRAINI COAST GUARD. GOB STILL CLAIMS THIS
SURVEY IS ITS GUIDE FOR THE NEEDED UPGRADING OF COASTAL
SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITIES ALTHOUGH THE RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE
NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED, OSTENSIBLY BECAUSE OF COST, BUT MORE
LIKELY BECAUSE OF INDECISION AS TO WHETHER THE DEFENSE
MINISTER OR THE INTERIOR MINISTER WILL CONTROL MODERNIZED
BAHRAINI COAST GUARD. GOB HAS MADE SOME TENTATIVE INFORMAL
EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN ACQUIRING US WEAPONS BUT HAS
MADE NO FORMAL REQUEST. THE AMIR APPEARS UNENTHUSIASTIC.
IN TIME THE GOB DESIRE FOR US EQUIPMENT AND
TRAINING MAY INTENSIFY. WHILE SOME GOB REQUESTS MAY BE
UNACCEPTABLE ON THE BASIS OF NEED AND COST, THOSE FOR
WHICH A SERIOUS REQUIREMENT CAN BE ESTABLISHED SHOULD PRE-
SENT THE USG WITH NO POLICY PROBLEMS.

9. ASSESSMENT: FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE UK,
JORDANIAN AND SAUDI ROLES IN BAHRAIN'S SECURITY FORCES
APPEAR TO SERVE US INTERESTS AND TO REQUIRE NO SIGNIFICANT
US ENCOURAGEMENT. THE GOB IS LIKELY TO SEEK A SOMEWHAT
CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US IN THE SECURITY FIELD,
PRIMARILY AS SOURCE OF EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING. IN RESPOND-
ING TO THIS INTEREST, WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO UNDERMINE
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THE UK-JORDANIAN-SAUDI PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN WHICH SEEMS TO
MESH WELL AND TO BE OF REAL BENEFIT BOTH TO GOB AND TO US.

10. WHILE ABOVE ANALYSIS LACKS PRECISE KNOWLEDGE CERTAIN
DETAILS, WE HAVE NO PRESENT REASON TO BELIEVE OUR FURTHER
INVESTIGATIONS WILL SIGNIFICANTLY ALTER ASSESSMENT. HENCE,
IN ABSENCE SPECIFIC DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRARY,
THIS CABLE WILL CONSTITUTE OUR RESPONSE TO A-74.
TWINAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, POLICE FORCES, MILITARY PLANS, CONSULTANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MANAMA00217
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750060-1201
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750228/aaaaaytk.tel
Line Count: 380
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 29563, 75 STATE A-74
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : ADVISORY ROLES OF THE UK AND CERTAIN OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE PERSIAN GULF STATES
TAGS: PORS, PINS, MASS, UK, JO, SA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006